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Worldwide Report

LAW OF THE SEA

No. 148



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REPORT ON INDIAN OCEAN-BED WEALTH, MAURITIUS, REUNION CLAIMS

Manganese Discoveries Off Mauritius

Port Louis LE NOUVEAU MILITANT in French 13-19 Feb 81 pp 1,8

[Excerpts] Large-scale deposits of manganese nodules appear to have been discovered in the territorial waters of Mauritius. This disclosure was made by Dr S. Z. Quasim, director of the National Institute of Oceanography of India and head of the scientific team of the oceanographic research ship "Gaveshan," during a symposium given at the University of Mauritius last Wednesday on the theme of the marine resources of the Indian Ocean.

The "Gaveshan," an Indian research ship, is one of the best equipped in the world in the exploration of marine resources, and Dr Quasim, who heads a team on this ship, stated last Wednesday that according to information gathered, sizable deposits of manganese nodules, with a strong content of copper, nickel and cobalt, were discovered in Mauritius' economic zone, more particularly, he stated, a few miles off the Mauritian coasts.

On the other hand, Dr Quasim stated that it would be desirable for the riparian countries of the Indian Ocean to find a common platform, so as to find together a technology for the exploration and mining of these nodules.

The discovery of these nodules in Mauritian territorial waters and, more particularly, near the island of Rodrigues serves to stress once more the need for an increased surveillance of our waters. Rodrigues, from this perspective, takes on major strategic importance. "It is necessary, from now on," one expert stated, "to closely survey this halfway line which separates Reunion and the Mauritian territorial waters."

France Covets Manganese Wealth

Port Louis LE NOUVEAU MILITANT in French 20-26 Feb 81 pp 6,7

[Text] On Wednesday, 11 February, a symposium was held at the University of Mauritius on the topic of the marine

resources of the Indian Ocean. Dr S. Z. Quasim, director of the National Institute of Oceanography of India, revealed the discovery of large-scale deposits of manganese nodules in the territorial waters of Mauritius. These nodules contain copper, nickel and cobalt.

In October 1979, a news report announced the discovery of three large-scale deposits of polymetallic nodules off the island of Reunion and in the 200-sea-mile zone. As the deposit was of exceptional density, the specialists could be led to reconsider the notion of an exploitable deposit. New means of dredging and trawling set up in 1980 on board the "Marion Dufresne" could make it possible to bring on board nodules by tens of tons, so as to permit statistical studies of grade and density, and the possible testing of production lines for industrial treatment. Soviet sources indicate that massive quantities of manganese nodules could be identified in the vicinity of Rodrigues.

France claims possession of three sub-Antarctic archipelagos located in the southern part of the Indian Ocean: the islands of Crozet, Kerguelen, St Paul and Amsterdam. France aims at systematically exploring the continental plateau of the Kerguelens so as to localize there possible petroleum deposits. The French national company Elf Aquitaine recently requested a research permit covering the entirety of the plateau; prospecting work could begin by the end of this year.

Nodules--What Are They?

Nodules are balls of rock containing copper, nickel, manganese, etc which are found on the bottom of the sea in large quantities. It is estimated that there are 18 trillion tons of nodules in the world's oceans. There are enough copper nodules to meet world needs for another 6,000 years.

Manganese is very important in the steel industry. It neutralizes the sulphur in the steel and makes the steel harder. Manganese is used in the manufacture of steel and of aluminum alloys. Cobalt resists corrosion and is essential for jets and turbines. Nickel, like manganese, is used in the production of steel. Electric wires are manufactured from copper and nickel. Thus, the industrial importance of these famous "nodules" can be understood.

France's Role

Since 1977 and 1978, France has set up exclusive economic zones, 200 nautical miles wide, along the coasts of all its overseas possessions. Thus, with a domain of 10.7 million square kilometers, it is at the head of the third-ranking world maritime empire. In the Indian Ocean, it has, with Reunion, Mayotte, the so-called scattered islands around Madagascar and the T.A.A.F. [French Southern and Antarctic Territories], 2.8 million square kilometers.

France is very much ahead of the other industrialized countries with regard to ocean-bed mining.

It has:

- (1) a national center for exploitation of the oceans (CNEXO) set up since 1967;
- (2) an interministerial sea mission which tries to coordinate the activities of the marine operations sectors scattered among the ministries;
- (3) scientific or applied research teams set up for many years within CNEXO;
- (4) the already long-continuing efforts of the French Army, which has a hydrographic and oceanological service, a center for study and research in biophysiology, and experience in deep-water operations thanks to the Undersea Operations Group;
- (5) the bureau of geological and mining exploration (BRGM) (petroleum, nodules).

It has also developed systems for the exploitation of the nodules.

Reunion, Rodrigues: What Future?

Reunion until now was totally dependent on aid from the home country. Independence was out of the question. How could some dare to speak of independence when, theoretically, a Reunion national enjoyed one of the highest incomes in Africa for a population of 500,000 inhabitants that did not have any possibility of real development! But the possibility of the industrial exploitation of nodules should make possible the rational growth of the germ of independence; it is no longer, in fact, a question of the idea of independence, with whatever it could have of utopia in the limited political and economic conditions of the island, but of an irreversible movement that will make it possible to reveal in broad daylight the conflicts of interest existing between the local population as a whole and a minority that wishes the continuation of home country assistance and that carefully avoids the setting up of a local agricultural and industrial infrastructure that would lead to economic and then to political independence.

In any event, at this stage, international considerations come into play. Reunion represents the last strategic point for France in the Indian Ocean and could soon become the last bastion of the West in this region of the southern hemisphere. Perhaps another secure base is needed? Rodrigues?

Now the stake of Rodrigues is clear. Independent politically--under Emperor Gaetan I?--independent economically--because of those famous nodules--fiercely pro-French, Rodrigues could be for France a secure base, in case of problems in Reunion, and a counterweight to Diego Garcia, because France distrusts the Americans as much as the Russians, because the United States and especially President Reagan do not look favorably on France's world role and would not hesitate to dislodge it where American interests are important.

We must be very vigilant.

The Island Mentality

The future of Mauritius is intimately linked with the sea that surrounds us. Formerly a little island of 2,000 square kilometers, Mauritius today represents 1.2 million square kilometers with its "maritime economic zone." We must change the "sugar mentality," but also the "island mentality." It is the sea, together with the land, that represents the future of the island. If as much had been invested in marine development as in land cultivation, Mauritius would have been much more independent economically today.

But the hope that the nodules and the marine resources represent should not blind us to the schemes of the great powers, which are guided by their own interest and do not care about the rights and aspirations of the peoples of the region. While refusing independence to Reunion, they encourage the secession of Rodrigues from the sovereign and independent state of Mauritius.

94 34

CSO: 5200

BRIEFS

AFRICAN COUNTRIES SIGN ANTIPOLLUTION TREATY--Beijing, 24 Mar (XINHUA)--Sixteen west and central African countries signed a treaty to protect their coastline and coastal waters from pollution yesterday in Abidjan, capital of Ivory Coast, according to foreign news reports. They agreed to cooperate in emergencies such as spills of oil or toxic chemicals. Oil tankers flushing out their tanks in the territorial waters of the countries stretching from Mauritania to South-West Africa are a principal source of visible pollution. The 16 countries agreed to provide \$2.5 million in 1982 and 1983 for a special regional trust fund to set up a research, monitoring and assessment program in the Gabonese capital of Libreville. Nigeria will contribute \$650,000 and the UN environment program has pledged \$1.4 million over the next three years. Signing on the treaty were Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo and Zaire. [Text] [OW241605 Beijing XINHUA in English 1531 GMT 24 Mar 81]

CSO: 5200

ASIANS SECURE KERMADEC ISLANDS TUNA FISHING LICENSES

Auckland THE NEW ZEALAND HERALD in English 7 Mar 81 p 8

[Text]

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries has issued 34 tuna long-line licences in the Kermadec Islands area for Asian fishing boats.

The licences will permit 20 South Korean and 14 Taiwanese fishing boats to target fish for albacore and yellowfin tuna.

The first boats are due this month and they will all be allowed to fish until the end of August.

The arrangement is the first foreign licensing deal secured by the ministry for area "A," although Asian longliners used to work the waters occasionally before the 200-mile zone was established.

A ministry spokesman said the longliners would probably drift in and out of the

200-mile zone in the area during their licence period following the fish migrations. Area "A" has yet to be established as a viable commercial fishery. The ministry has tried before to encourage experimental foreign fishing round the Kermadecs to assess its potential.

C30: 5200

NEED FOR PROTECTION OF ISLANDS' FISHING ZONE STRESSED

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 12 Mar 81 p 6

[Article by Inder Malhotra]

[Text]

It was not entirely fortuitous that Mrs. Gandhi found time amidst other preoccupations during Parliament's budget session to pay a three-day visit to the Andaman and Nicobar islands, quick in the wake of an earlier trip to Lakshadweep. At a time when the Indian ocean is becoming the world's hot spot number one it is only natural that she should devote special attention to the off-shore Indian islands. Their value and potential have not been fully appreciated in the past. But these can no longer be overlooked.

In her speeches during her island-hopping tour of the Andamans, the Prime Minister was refreshingly frank about the problem of dual neglect with which these islands have been beset. She acknowledged that many of the socio-economic difficulties of the islanders had not been attended to and promised that this state of affairs would be set right. And by drawing attention to the ceaseless intrusions by foreign vessels into the Indian waters surrounding the Andamans and Nicobar islands she underscored both their strategic importance and current vulnerability.

The twin problems, it is perhaps needless to add, are more acute in the case of the Andamans than in that of Lakshadweep which is less populous, rather close to the west coast (only 200 km. as the crow flies) and far away from alien mainlands.

The Andamans, by contrast, are more than a thousand kilometres away from the nearest point on the mainland and rather close to several foreign countries such as Burma, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand. In fact, the southernmost tip of the Nicobar group of islands is separated from Indonesia's northernmost point by only

80 miles of water. Moreover, many of the 319 islands that comprise the union territory of Andamans and Nicobar are uninhabited. In these facts of geography must be added the lesson of history. The Japanese were able to occupy the Andamans during the second World War with remarkable ease though the Indian ocean was then supposed to be a British lake.

ERRATIC

Quite clearly, therefore, the problem of protecting the Andamans and indeed using them as an advance base to safeguard India's maritime interests will be harder to tackle than meeting the economic needs of the 200,000 inhabitants though even today the communications between the mainland and the offshore islands remain inadequate and erratic. Those from one island to another are a lot worse.

Nature has endowed the Andamans and Nicobar with vast resources and equable climate. The potential for their development is, therefore, immense. Indeed, it is ironic that only a fraction of the fish available around the Andamans is being caught at present: a bulk of it is poached on by others. During her stay in Port Blair, Mrs. Gandhi inaugurated a red-palm plantation, the latest in a newly-started series. Groundnut cultivation can also be introduced there in a big way.

In fact, some economists have calculated that in course of time, the Andamans and Nicobar islands by themselves can wipe out the entire shortage of edible oils that has been bedeviling the country's economy for some years.

However, planned economic development cannot be a wholly

painless process. The local population — particularly the tribal one — will have to be educated patiently about its implications. For instance there is an incipient feeling among the tribes that too many "outsiders" have already come into their habitat. But then no worthwhile project of development can be pushed through by a small population lacking technical skills without some influx of planners, engineers, experts, administrators, managers and even a labour force.

The kind of problem that has arisen in Assam need not be repeated in the offshore islands if the cabinet committee on the Andamans that Mrs. Gandhi has promised to set up exercises the necessary vigilance over the whole process of development there.

Similarly, with due care on the part of all concerned, new plantations of edible oilseeds, cardamom, cloves, black pepper and the like can be started without damaging the ecology of the lovely string of islands. Forests can be cut to make room for plantations in one place and an afforestation programme can be undertaken elsewhere.

LIMITED

The problems of security in relation to the Andamans and Nicobar call for both greater care and more strenuous efforts than those of economic development. To start with, the islands are inadequately garrisoned and this gap needs to be filled without delay. A Port Blair-based fortress command is the only instance of a unified task force of all the three armed forces on a permanent basis in this country. But obviously both its reach and punch are limited. For were it not so, foreign armed intruders would not have dared to

violate Indian territorial waters and the exclusive economic zone so persistently as they are doing at present. The intruders, of course, deal with apparent impunity fish belonging to this country. But they also indulge in other nefarious activities. There have been cases of attempted espionage, subversion and even illegal occupation of uninhabited islands.

From all indications, the chiefs of staff committee in New Delhi has been alive to this problem. But its remedial action has been slow. This is due only partly to the perennial problem of paucity of resources. Partly at least the reason is that it is taking more time than necessary to build living accommodation for troops or sailors in remote islands. In remote islands, why officers and men cannot make do temporarily with tented accommodation has never been satisfactorily explained.

Given adequate force and appropriate equipment, more notably light but armed naval aircraft, even a small country like Seychelles has succeeded in keeping intruders away from its waters. There is no reason, therefore, why this country should not be able to look after its islands even more effectively.

But, in all fairness, it must be conceded that this cannot be done merely by augmenting military and para-military presence in the islands. All others involved in the administration of the Andamans and Nicobar, whether directly from Port

Blair or through remote control from New Delhi, must also see to it that they do nothing, wittingly or unwittingly, to undermine Indian interests.

The sad truth is that some of the security problems in and around the Andamans have been either created or at least aggravated because one hand of the Indian government seldom knows what the other is doing.

BIZARRE

It is no secret, for instance, that high-speed, well-equipped foreign trawlers first got an opportunity to rampage through the Indian waters around the Andamans thanks to the Union agriculture ministry's policy on the licensing of deep-sea fishing by Indian or India-based foreign firms. Under this policy these firms had no obligation to acquire fishing trawlers of their own but were free to hire these from anywhere. The result was that under cover of every lawfully hired trawler, three or four came in unlawfully to fish in Indian waters. This was particularly the case with Thai trawlers. By the time the loophole was discovered, the intruders had become much too brazen. They had also taken care to arm themselves to be able to force their way into Indian waters, exploiting the inadequacy of naval and coast guard presence.

This is by no means the end of the story. The situation becomes even more bizarre whenever naval

vessels on patrol or engaged in an exercise do catch intruding armed trawlers and try to bring them to book. For, incredible though it may seem, under existing laws precious little can be done to punish the culprits.

In a recent case, the authorities spent nearly a lakh of rupees on arresting, feeding, detaining and prosecuting the audacious crew of an intruding fishing vessel. Six months later, the crew went home after paying a fine of Rs. 2,000 per head. Why? because the only crime they could be charged with was entry into Indian territorial waters without valid visas!

It was five years ago that Parliament passed the law to extend the territorial waters from three to 12 miles and to proclaim a 200 mile exclusive economic zone. But no one has taken the trouble to enact the consequential legislation prescribing punishment for the violation of either the enhanced territorial waters limit or the EEZ. To be sure a draft of the law that needs to be passed exists. But it has, as usual, got lost in New Delhi's bureaucratic maze.

During her stay in Port Blair, Mrs. Gandhi urged the people of the Andamans and Nicobar to be vigilant against hostile foreign activity. Someone in her office sent to "endorse" a copy of her appeal also to relevant ministers and top officials in the capital.

BRIEFS

LAW AGAINST POACHING--The Centre has prepared a Bill incorporating provisions for confiscation of trawlers used by foreign fishermen for illegally poaching in the Indian territorial waters, Minister of State for Agriculture R V Swaminathan said in the Lok Sabha on Friday, reports PTI. The Bill, which had already been approved by the Cabinet, would be introduced in Parliament soon, the Minister said while replying to a debate on a private member's Bill moved by Mr R K Mhalgi (BJP). Mr Swaminathan said that so far there was provision for punishing the poachers but not for confiscating their vessels. Following the Minister's reply, Mr Mhalgi withdrew his Bill which sought to provide protection to country-fishermen from the competition of motor boats and trawlers. [Text] [New Delhi PATRIOT in English 7 Mar 81 p 8]

SAFEGUARDS OF ECONOMIC ZONE--Port Blair, March 8 (UNI, PTI). The Prime Minister said here this evening that the Government would strengthen legal and other safeguards against violation of India's territorial waters by foreign ships in the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean. Mrs Indira Gandhi was talking to newsmen in the course of a rather intensive tour of the Andaman and Nicobar islands. One possible legal safeguard is believed to be extension of the territorial waters from the present 12 nautical miles. Mrs Gandhi asked the people of Andaman and Nicobar islands to remain vigilant against encroachment on the country's water territory by foreign ships violating territorial waters. Addressing a mammoth gathering at Rangat in middle Andaman this morning, Mrs Gandhi said any such encroachment on the Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean would not only pose danger to the islands but for the entire country. She called upon the islanders to work unitedly as soldiers to ensure that no foreign power could intrude into country's water territory as well as economic zone. [Excerpt] [New Delhi PATRIOT in English 9 Mar 81 p 7]

TAMIL NADU COASTAL SURVEILLANCE--The Finance Minister, Mr. V. R. Nedunchezian, told the Legislative Council on Monday that the Central Government was considering the Tamil Nadu Government's request for permanent surveillance of the coastal areas of the State to prevent poaching by foreign fishing vessels in the sea. The Minister, who was replying to supplementaries during question hour, said since it was not possible for the State Police to deal with the matter, the Government had sought the help of the Eastern Naval Command and Coast Guard Organisation through the Central Government. Replying to the main question of Mr. M. Sankaralingam, Opposition Leader, the Minister said fishing by foreign vessels near Tuticorin and other Tamil Nadu coastal areas had been brought to the notice of the State Government. [Excerpt] [Madras THE HINDU in English 11 Mar 81 p 12]

HUGE MANGANESE NODULES DISCOVERED--New Delhi, 10 March--Scientists of the National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) situated in the former Portuguese colony of Goa, on the west coast, had recently discovered a huge "carpet" of manganese nodules on the seabed near India, it was reported today. According to PTI news agency, the discovery of the nodules and their successful recovery was announced by NIO Director, Dr S.Z. Qasim, at a Press conference on board the NIO research vessel *Gaveshani* which hauled up the first sample on January 6. Samples of these precious nodules had been hauled up from a depth of 4,500 metres in a major technological feat marking India's successful entry into the mining of the ocean floor, Qasim claimed. The nodules contain nickel, cobalt, copper and some manganese besides traces of gold. India's mineral reserves, the reports said, will increase manifold with NIO's discovery of a vast area of the seabed literally strewn with these potato-sized nodules. The exact location of the nodules has not been disclosed because of international competition in ocean mining. But it is believed to be within India's economic zone thereby giving her the right of exclusive ownership, the agency added. The report quoted Dr Qasim as indicating that India and Mauritius could collaborate in the mining of the precious nodules from the Indian Ocean. Only six other nations in the world have nodule mining capability. They are the United States, USSR, UK, West Germany, France and Japan, the report added. NAB/AFP [Text] [Rangoon THE WORKING PEOPLE'S DAILY in English 12 Mar 81 p 6]

CSD: 5200

FISHING FLEET TREBLES AS RESULT OF 200-MILE ZONE LAW

Auckland THE NEW ZEALAND HERALD in English 9 Mar 81 p 20

[Excerpt] During the past decade the country's merchant fleet has grown by half and the fishing fleet has trebled.

The most spectacular growth has been with the deep-sea fishing fleet, a direct result of the introduction of the 200-mile zone.

Figures produced by Lloyd's Register of Shipping indicate New Zealand now has 122 merchant ships with a gross tonnage of 263,343 tonnes.

There are now 31 fishing boats of 100 tonnes gross or more.

While the 200-mile zone has added much new tonnage to the fishing fleet, the New Zealand Shipping Corporation and offshore oil industry at Taranaki have been the main contributors towards the growth in merchant shipping.

Best Grounds

A remarkable transformation has taken place with the fishing industry.

Hardly a decade ago Japanese fishing boats caught a big percentage of New Zealand snapper by long line. Now all the snapper is taken by New Zealand boats, even though much of it is exported.

Local fishermen have proved they can compete and export fish in areas where modern technology can be

applied and where the product is premium or fish of a higher value.

Creation of the 200-mile exclusive economic zone has seen the best fishing grounds reserved for local boats.

Not unexpectedly, the fishing industry has reacted. In 1970 New Zealand had just 10 fishing boats of 100 tonnes or more with a gross tonnage of 2287 tonnes.

Most of the new investment has been made in replacing obsolete inshore craft with larger trawlers for middle-distance fishing.

Apart from the 200-mile zone there are other reasons local fishing boats can compete more effectively now.

Closer to Home

Successive fuel price increases have made it far less economic to send fishing boats from Japan and Korea to fish in New Zealand for a few months.

Japanese wages, in particular, have risen, so the differential between New Zealand and Japanese fishermen is not as great.

Fishing boats from this country spend more productive time at sea because the fishing grounds are closer to base. There are no long voyages that the Asians must make.

OFFSHORE OIL EXPLORATION IN GREAT SOUTH BASIN MAY RESUME

Hunt Company Interest

Wellington THE EVENING POST In English 3 Mar 81 p 4

[Article by energy reporter Michael Field]

[Text] Oil exploration work in the wild but promising Great South Basin may be started again if talks being held in Wellington are successful.

Three officials from America's Hunt International Petroleum Company are in the city for talks with the Government, the Ministry of Energy and the Petroleum Corporation.

The team is lead by Hunt's chief geologist and Great South Basin project manager, Mr Robert M Sanford.

He is anxious to keep the visit at a low key level, and in an interview with the "Post" said he was here only to "explore" the prospects of getting some kind of work under way in the Great South Basin again.

Industry sources, however, say that while the visitors will be tackling difficult legal issues with the Government, it does highlight Hunt's continuing interest in New Zealand.

Hunt International drilled seven offshore wells in the basin from 1975 to 1977, recording shows of gas and oil. They stopped further work when a major row blew up with the Government over plans to impose a new tax on any new oil and gas finds.

Mr Sanford, who ran the drilling programme, has remained optimistic about prospects.

Potential

"Reasonably conservative calculations indicate that the potential of offshore New Zealand oil could be of the order of 1600 million to 2000 million barrels, if indeed any of the basins prove productive," he wrote last year in an extensive article in the leading world trade magazine "Oil and Gas Journal".

Asked yesterday if his view remained the same, Mr Sanford said he would not be here if anything had changed.

Hunt International is known to have carried out extensive computer analysis recently on the wealth of geological information gained during the drilling programme.

Mr Sanford would not comment in detail on what his team would be talking about with the Government, preferring to say only that Hunt International was interested in "getting something going down here".

A Ministry of Energy official said yesterday that future licences for Hunt in the Great South Basin would be discussed.

Hunt and its partner, Philips International, share a licence with Petrocorp over 79,349 sq km of the Great South Basin, approximately half the size of the original licence area. The licence is due to expire in April, although the partners have rights of renewals over blocks for a further seven years.

But Hunt is known to be concerned with the lack of detailed legal protection it would have over the area. When it was granted the licence last year it sought extensive contractual protection in the form of an "executive deed".

However, it is understood that Hunt still has not reached satisfactory arrangements on this issue, and the matter is likely to be on the agenda for talks this week.

It is understood that Hunt requires a detailed agreement because any future work in the Great South Basin will mean especially long lead-times before work can begin.

That is a consequence of the extremely rugged conditions in the Great South Basin, and the fact that

further drilling would involve Hunt in pioneer new deep water drilling techniques.

Water depth in the basin is between 500 metres and 900 metres.

The Maui rig by contrast stands in around 100 metres of water, and the world's deepest production wells, those in the Gulf of Mexico, operate in 300 metres of water.

In spite of this, Hunt appears anxious to discuss further work, perhaps indicating its assessment of the odds on a major find in the Great South Basin.

Geologically the Great South Basin is similar to Australia's Bass Strait oil and gas fields.

A Ministry of Energy prospectus on the area states that "the potential of this very large basin has hardly been tested."

'POST' Welcomes News

Wellington THE EVENING POST in English 4 Mar 81 p 2

[Editorial: "Oil Challenge"]

[Text]

IT IS heartening news for New Zealand that one of the world's oil giants, Hunt International Petroleum Company, is clinging to its faith in the Great South Basin as a potential source of immense output.

Hunt International has not been scared off by its earlier taxation run-in with the Government and three officials from the American company are now in Wellington to have talks with the Government, the Ministry of Energy and the Petroleum Corporation on the possibility of resuming oil exploration work in the wild and challenging basin.

The Government is anxious to attract more overseas oil explorations to New Zealand and early last year launched a campaign to make its views known in the circles that matter. Hunt International has shown that it is ready, willing, and, we assume, eager to test the potential of the rugged Great South Basin with all its adverse factors of

extreme weather conditions, deep water, remoteness and high drilling costs.

Not many companies would be willing to tackle such an arduous assignment — much more difficult than the North Sea project — even with the prospect of such rich spoils as envisaged by Hunt International. The company's chief geologist, and Great South Basin project manager, Mr Robert M Sanford, has previously stated — and holds to the view — that reasonably conservative calculations indicate that the possible oil potential of offshore New Zealand could be of the order of 1500 million to 2000 million barrels if any of the basins do prove effective.

The current talks involve difficult legal issues, but there are compelling reasons why the Government should do its utmost to ensure that, provided this country gets a satisfactory share of the action, the talks are not allowed to founder.

Other Concession Blocks

Auckland THE NEW ZEALAND HERALD in English 9 Mar 81 Sec 2 p 8

[Article by business news editor M. A. McPhee]

[Text] Decisions soon on applications for the 29 New Zealand western offshore petroleum exploration blocks offered by the New Zealand Government are not the only ones in prospect.

Licences to the Great South Basin and, further south, the Campbell Basin blocks of Hunt Petroleum and partners — greatly reduced from the original vast concessions — expire on April 13.

The chances are, that if the agreed work programmes have been fulfilled, renewal is probable should Hunt and its associates, Placid and Impel,

and partner Phillips Petroleum negotiate satisfactory work programmes and find enough incentive.

Who else is prepared, as they have been, to play the risks of the wild, wildcat realm? The potential prizes in the giant structures, though, are great.

The Government-owned Petrocorp, through its exploration subsidiary, has, with Hunt, a farm-in

partnership in which it contributes 40 per cent of cost for a 51 per cent share in any success.

Petrocorp has a similar agreement with Shell BP Todd in its Taranaki offshore areas.

These farm-in partnerships are optional for Petrocorp Exploration which makes its own assessments on the worth of prospects.

It would have been on its

experts' measurement of the risk and the company's resources that Petrocorp Exploration has not taken up its option to farm in on the South Island West Coast offshore concessions of New Zealand Petroleum Ltd and the more recent one of Cuitus Pacific NL of Australia.

The Cuitus permit is for five years and requires 1000 kilometres of seismic

survey and two wells. Venture partners are Caltex, York Resources NL, Quaker Resources (listed in Canada but controlled by Caltex), Martin Oil NL and Archon Oil NL each with 20 per cent.

If these explorers strike bonanzas Petrocorp will not share in them. Neither, of course, will it have to contribute to the exploration costs.

NZ Petroleum has in its venture American interests headed by Triton Oil and Gas Corporation, the operator Diamond Shamrock Corporation through its Australian subsidiary Crusader Oil NL, Champion Petroleum (wholly owned subsidiary of Union Pacific of Canada) and Cornwall Petroleum and Resources of Vancouver. It expects drilling to come after the Ka-whia well of Shell BP Todd, now being drilled in licence 38048, is finished.

This well as the much-talked-of structure 5, is shared not only by Petrocorp but also by Shell's associate Shell Oil of the United States.

Shell BP Todd and Petrocorp plan several other wells in their prospecting licence areas.

One Licence

Onshore, Petrocorp has farmed out a slice of western Taranaki to the BHP subsidiary Hematite Petroleum which partners Esso in Australia's Bass Strait field. Hematite will earn a 49 per cent interest in return for a seismic work programme and drilling of one well.

Petrocorp holds nearly all onshore Taranaki in one licence, No 38034.

Exceptions are the Kapuni mining licence area

and a 28-hectare piece of former New Plymouth. This mining licence 38042 was recently acquired by Russell Matthews Industries Ltd which is piping gas from the old Republic Petroleum No 1 well, by the Hyde Quay wharf, for preparing road sealing material. The licence expires in October 2000.

Gas produced in the tiny Hawkes Bay mining licence (see map) is used for glasshouse heating.

Shaping up for a petroleum mining licence is the McKee structure area, 15 kilometres south-east of Waitara, where gas and oil flows have been encountered by Petrocorp. Flow rates of 500 to 1700 barrels a day of light waxy crude and 500,000 to 900,000 cubic feet of gas a day have been tested on quarter-inch and half-inch chokes.

Deep Drilling

Significantly, Petrocorp has signed a two-year lease for a rig capable of drilling to 7000 metres (about 23,000 feet). This is in line with the international trend to deeper drilling. It is here that convention and non-convention agree and part company. They agree that hydrocarbons exist at greater depths but differ on why.

One theory is that hydrocarbons do not necessarily have their origin in organic materials cooked in the earth under pressure. It is believed methane gas was formed by chemistry during creation of the earth and has been seeping from deep traps holding it at enormous pressure into reservoirs nearer the surface.

It has been noted that of wells drilled beyond 4200 metres (13,800 ft) in the

United States in the past year 68 per cent have produced gas.

Release of gas from great depths to nearer the surface, it is said, has been aided by earthquake activity. Certainly many of the world's hydrocarbon production fields are in quake-prone regions, be they Kapuni and Maui or those in the Middle East and Indonesia.

High Pressures

Where gas is present at great depths, of course, the reservoir need not be big in size to contain vast amounts of pressurised gas.

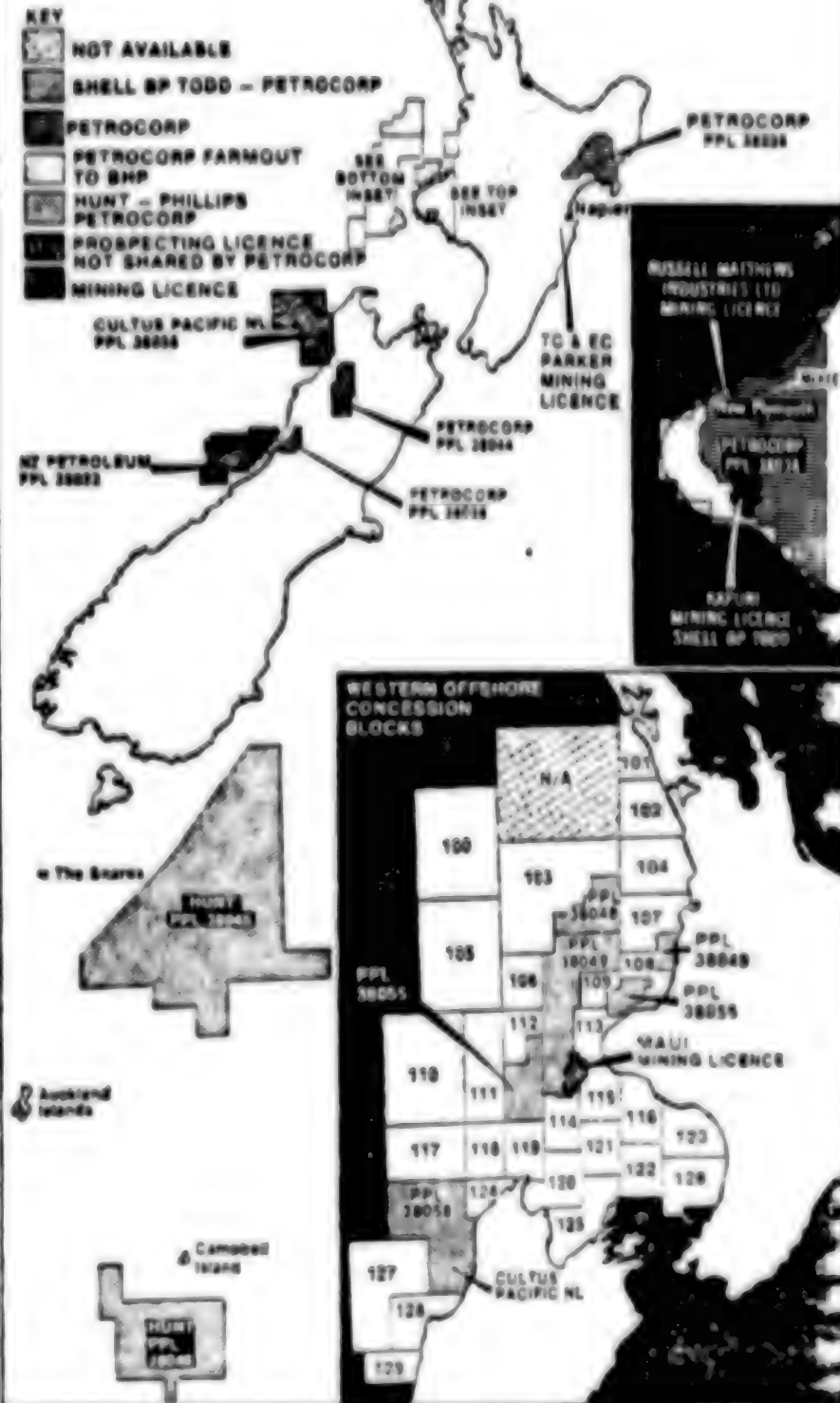
It can be trapped both within sandstone rock and briny water at more than 10,000 pounds a square inch, 115 degrees Celsius and more than 3800 metres (12,500 ft) down.

Deeper still at beyond 7300m (24,000ft) say some observers, are unexplored deep basins with potential energy rich sediments. Here, too, of course, are those vast pressures, heat and corrosives such as hydrogen sulphides which can wreck normal drilling casings.

There are varied sources of gas — coalfields from which methane, the old miners' fear, can be extracted, shale fields and "tight" sands can be cracked by pumping in special fluids to free trapped gas.

The non-conventional may also point to methane hydrate layers of gas and water made solid at the right temperatures and pressures such as those in some deep ocean sediments and beneath Arctic permafrost.

NZ OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION



GREATER USE OF FISHING RESOURCE URGED

Karachi DAWN in English 7 Mar 81 p 5

[Editorial: "Dee-Sea Fishing"]

[Text]

THE arrest of a few Taiwanese fishing trawlers for encroaching upon Pakistan's exclusive economic zone highlights a problem which in all likelihood is going to be with us for a long time. How long will depend on our ability to build a credible defence against this kind of aggression. While the Pakistan Navy and the Coast Guards did a good job in nabbing the erring Taiwanese trawlers, the arrest does not speak of an ever-present capacity to detect encroachment wherever it occurs in a large area and catch the violators. But the encroachment does confirm the fact that our deep seas have great fisheries reserves which we cannot exploit owing to the lack of a modern fishing fleet. These reserves have been attracting trawlers from far-off East Asian countries because their reserves have in many places been depleted on account of excessive fishing. Inadequate policing of our 200-mile exclusive economic

zone has provided a tempting ground for poachers. The risk they seem to carry is minimal while the reward they expect to garner is great. We must get better organised to combat the menace. In the past, the poachers were allowed to get away with nominal fines and warnings. To deter illegal fishing in our economic zone, those caught and found guilty must be awarded exemplary punishment. Unhindered poaching will be an invitation to more uninvited guests. The FAO has already advised enforcement of strict measures for regulating fishing in our grounds in the interest of stock preservation.

Our inability so far to exploit a tremendous source of food speaks of lack of enterprise. Here is a great opportunity we are throwing away. Fishing has got to be organised on modern lines if it is to prove highly remunerative. Our present fishing fleet is largely primitive and unfit for deep-sea fishing. We need an infusion of big money to

acquire factory ships and modern trawlers, to develop an indigenous capacity at the KSEW for manufacturing these vessels, to develop processing on land and to help those already in business increase their catch. Fishing offers a new and exciting line of investment for those entrepreneurs who find other avenues less attractive for reasons of their own. It also offers vast opportunities to those private investors who have been suggesting commercialisation of agricultural production with an option to corporate enterprise to invest in the agricultural sector. The present trawler owners and fish exporters should be encouraged to modernise their facilities and to enlarge the scope of their operations. Deep-sea fishing joint ventures may be set up only as a last resort when local entrepreneurs are not coming forward in this field. Our exclusive economic zone is estimated to have a stock potential of two lakh tons in excess

of our regular catch. All this goes waste or is exploited by illegal poaching. The private sector should channel its idle funds into the fishing industry, especially deep-sea fishing, which requires big, modern ships equipped with catching gear, processing and packing plants and cold storage facilities. The conversion of the two old research ships of the Government for locating reserves of fish on the high seas will provide a great new facility to fishermen free of cost. In other countries, fishermen do it on their own at a great expense. With the development of deep-sea fishing, the harbour facilities will have to be expanded to accommodate bigger trawlers or ships and their catch. A programme of expansion of the Karachi Fish Harbour is in progress and another fish harbour is to be constructed at Korangi. One hopes the expanded harbour facilities under construction will come as a boon to our underdeveloped fishing industry.

MANY APPLY FOR MARINE FISHING LICENSES

Karachi DAWN in English 15 Mar 81 pp 1, 8

[Article by Izharul Hasan Burney]

[Text]

The Federal Government is considering several applications for grant of licence for marine fishing in the Pakistani fishing zone.

Among them is the application of a Pakistani-South Korean joint venture company engaged in deep-sea fishing since April 1979 and whose current licence expires on March 31 next.

This is the first time that marine fishing licence may be granted by the Federal Government. In the past, this has been done by the provincial governments, of course with the approval of the Federal authorities.

With the approaching deadline for grant of fresh licence, controversy has developed and has become sharp following reports of hauling of several foreign flag vessels for violating the Pakistani fishing zone. Many more might still be operating within these limits, trade circles guessed.

Pakistan has a 720-mile coastal line — 350 miles in Sind and about 470 in Baluchistan.

Upto 12 miles from this coastal line in the Pakistani territorial waters limit. Beyond this up to another 500 miles is Pakistan's marine fishing zone i.e. a total of 212 miles from the coastal line.

While the coastal fishing zone is upto 30 miles deep-sea fishing is done in a 170-mile belt beyond this zone.

Countrycraft and launches owned by members of the Fishermen's Cooperative Society operate

within the coastal fishing zone. In fact, these cannot fully exploit the sea wealth because of limited engine power and remain within a 15-20-mile belt.

Sophisticated fishing vessels are engaged for marine fishing. Pakistan does not have any such craft. A company was floated in early sixties but it failed in its pioneering effort.

The Pakistani-South Korean joint venture, registered as "RCD Enterprises", got a licence from Sind Government initially for a period of one year which was renewed from time to time and now expires on March 31, 1981.

AGREEMENT

The South Koreans own all the three sophisticated vessels which are also self-contained processing units — each with a capacity of 500 tons of dried fish and up to 1,300 tons of fresh fish per year.

Salient features of the current agreement are:

- 30 per cent foreign exchange of the total sales proceeds to be deposited with the State Bank;

- 10 per cent royalty to Sind Government on the basis of gross sales proceeds;

- 20 per cent of the profits to the local partners;

- an average of five Pakistani crew members and one Government Inspector to accompany each vessel on all voyages;

- Payment of 0.75 per cent research cess which is the only tax/duty leviable on fish exports.

For the purposes of assessment and valuation of the catch, vessels come to the outer anchorage and are inspected by officials of the Port, Customs and the Fisheries department. After this the carrier ship loads the processed fish for marketing, while the vessel returns to the fishing grounds.

On an average, each vessel reports at the outer anchorage twice a month. Till December 1961, the value of the catch has been assessed at about Rs 12 million which also earned about Rs four million worth of foreign exchange besides the share of profit to the local partners and Rs 1.5 million royalty fee to Sind Government.

VALUATION METHOD

The valuation of the catch rate fish has been done at the rate of Rs 10 per kg as against the European price of Rs 25 per kg and Rs 30 (wholesale) price in Saudi Arabia.

This is sought to be justified on the plea that the company had a commitment to sell the catch to Iran at that price.

It is claimed that the vessels had so far been dumping the trash fish. This is now proposed to be sold to Japan.

Trash fish is netted three to four times more than prized fish and therefore ultimate terms, if more or less equals the prized fish in value. Trash fish is a vital raw material for the fishmeal industry.

THREE PROBLEMS

Three main questions which arise out of this arrangement are:

1. Domestic fish consumption (1.5 kg per head annually) does not benefit at all because not an ounce of the catch is brought to the local market.

2. Seventy per cent of the sale proceeds (even at that low price) in foreign exchange are lost to the exchequer which gets just 30 per cent of it.

3. The arrangement does not hold any chance of Pakistan developing the capability to enter the field of marine fishing and the local partners' role remains that of a "seignioring partner".

As for the first part officials explained that initially attempts were made to market 30 per cent of the catch in local market.

It, however, caused problems. First, it raised the gross value by about 10 per cent, on account of transportation of the catch from the outer anchorage to the fish harbour.

Secondly, dumping of up to 50 tons of fish at an interval of five days caused problems of handling, loading and storage of the catch at the fish harbour and brought down the prices so drastically that the industry raised a hue and cry.

The experiment failed and the idea was dropped, they explained.

As for Pakistan being deprived all foreign exchange earnings it is confessed that the terms were highly unfavourable.

However, it is sought to be justified by the fact that the local partners have no real financial participation in vessel ownership. The problem can be remedied if some Pakistani parties were willing to make big investments in this highly profitable industry with a host of European and Asian countries, which were very keen to offer much better terms.

With little or no bargaining capacity, a one-sided agreement is inherent in the situation.

CONTROVERSY

Controversy also exists in respect of the licensed vessels intruding into the "coastal fishing zone" to the detriment of the small launches, as well as allegations that they might be delivering the processed fish or part thereof to the "carrier vessel" on the high seas.

Under the agreement, these vessels can operate beyond the 12-mile limit which is five miles away from the "coastal fishing zone". A government representative is always on the ship to ensure it. It has recently been decided to have a representative of the fishermen's cooperative society also.

However, this is basically a social problem. If one official can be charged with collusion and being dishonest, they may not be any better either.

Whether it is the violation of the fishing zone by Taiwanese trawlers or the "coastal fishing zone" by the licensed vessels the fact of the matter is that this can best be guaranteed by the presence of country's own fishing fleet, which is non-existent at present.

In the sub-continent, marine fishing for the last hundred years has been the responsibility of the provincial governments except in respects of national planning, training, education etc.

In Pakistan, the law was amended in early seventies and it is under this provision that the Federal Government has taken over the future licensing work.

It is certain to cause a host of problems because this is one industry where prospecting is done on the high seas while all the establishments are on shore which in the present case are the responsibility of the provincial government.

Notwithstanding various other aspects of this matter, what is particularly important is how and what steps besides collecting royalty fee the Federal Government proposes to take to build up Pakistan's own marine fishing industry — the industry which holds the highest potential and enabled Japan's growth into an industrial power and is injecting the same vigour to South Korea whose foreign exchange earnings from fish exports exceeded Pakistan's foreign exchange earnings from any single source or item.

NATION TO PLAY ACTIVE ROLE IN LAW OF SEA MEETING

Manila PHILIPPINES SUNDAY EXPRESS in English 8 Mar 81 p 3

[Text]

UNITED NATIONS -- The Philippines will play an active role at the final and crucial session of the United Nations' Law of the Sea Conference starting on Monday.

Of immediate importance to the conference is the selection of a new president of the conference after the death of the incumbent, Sri Lanka's Shirley H. Amerasingue.

Included in the Philippine delegation are Justice Jose Abad Santos, Minister Vicente Garcia and Ambassador Alejandro Yango, chief of the Philippine Mission to the UN.

Many of the more than 100 delegates to the conference had been dismayed over the recent decision of the United States to seek a delay in the approval of the final covenant.

Garcia said the Philippine delegation plans to work actively on the major points in the draft treaty on a final covenant considering the effort as being the key to the political and economic future of the country.

...

THE UN Conference on the Law of the Sea started in 1973. It aims to present a comprehensive formula which hopefully would lead to an internationally accepted law to

govern all nations as far as maritime navigation and exploration of sea resources are concerned.

The covenant is to deal with freedom of navigation and control of fisheries, protection of marine environment, and the regulation of scientific research and the creation of a new international organization to oversee the exploitation of deep seabed resources in areas beyond legally-accepted national jurisdictions.

...

AT ITS LAST conference in Geneva held August 1980, the delegates had all but agreed on the substantive provisions now stand embodied in an informal draft treaty composed of 300 articles, with nine annexes containing another 120 articles.

Considered one of the important breakthroughs is the agreement on the preservation of freedom of navigation, both on the high seas and in the new 200-mile exclusive "economic ones" in which control over living and non-living resources is vested in coastal states.

While the other limit of a nation's territorial sea has been increased from three to 12 nautical miles, a "transit passage" regime will preserve most of the attributes of freedom of navigation through the 116 straits around the world.

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that have been international waterways but would otherwise have become territorial seas by reason of the 12-mile extension.

On the economic aspects, coastal states may also claim the hard mineral resources, especially oil, likely to be found there, where the underwater continental margin extends beyond 200-mile exclusive zones. But claims on hard mineral resources will be subject to minimal revenue sharing provisions.

To protect the marine environment, the draft treaty gives power to coastal states with a single set of internationally established standards to protect themselves from oil spills. Most states, like the United States, can adopt more stringent standards for vessels entering their ports to guard against oil pollution.

CSO: 5200

EDITORIAL EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER FUTURE 200-MILE LIMIT

Santiago LA NACION in Spanish 13 Mar 81 p 3-A

[Text] The theory of the continental shelf and the 200-mile limit was proposed by Chile 30 years ago and is today supported by more than 100 countries. The entire Third World subscribed to it because it was thus defending its future.

The first treaty mentioned is the treaty between Chile, Peru, and Ecuador, signed in Santiago on 18 August 1952. Through their representative, the three countries declared the exclusive sovereignty and jurisdiction which each of them had over the sea off their coast, up to a minimum distance of 200 nautical miles from that coastline.

International organizations and quotations on the Law of the Sea included that formulation, gathering more and more supporters. This is one way of defending an incalculable wealth which is off the coast of each country.

The big powers however are not sharing that theory since it constitutes a limitation on their expansion. They do not want any obstructions on the oceans which they can reach with their big fleets and through their technological advance for the exploitation of underwater wealth.

Three powers--the Soviet Union, Japan, and the United States--finished off the whales at the South Pole. This is a resource which Chile had within its reach but which it never managed to harvest because it did not have the big factory vessels needed. Ecuador is losing its tuna resources due to the action of fishermen who come from thousands of miles away.

The Sea Conference being held within the United Nations has been obstructed by delegations who are precisely trying to undo those prior agreements. They represent powers that do not wish to be restricted in the future regarding the exploitation of the continental shelf.

Events at this conference however did not receive extensive coverage. The world is too much occupied and preoccupied by the current situation. This conference will determine the future of the coming generations of the Third World, of Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Chile, of all the little countries along the coast.

5058

CSO: 3010

KRILL POPULATION SEEN THREATENED BY SOVIET FISHING

Santiago LA NACION in Spanish 4 Mar 81 p 7-A

[Text] "The exploitation of krill by the Soviet Union threatens the existence of this crustacean in the future since, right now, we do not know anything about its reproduction capacity," said Oscar Guzman, head of the Chilean expedition which recently participated in the first international Antarctic biological experiment, the CIDECA, together with scientists from the Soviet Union, West Germany, Poland, and the United States.

The multinational expedition, which lasted 40 days in the Antarctic Ocean, had the objective of determining the volume of krill (a word of Norwegian origin which has no plural and which refers to a pelagic crustacean resembling a small shrimp) in order to provide a basis for the future handling of krill fishing.

Guzman, who yesterday held a press conference with top officials from the Chilean Antarctic Institute, who are sponsoring this type of research in Chile, announced that, while scientists from various countries, including Russian scientists, conducted the investigation on land, a fleet of the USSR, consisting of 15 boats, was fishing in the vicinity of Bransfield Strait, catching a quantity estimated between 300,000 and 500,000 tons. On top of this there are the advances which the Soviet Union has made in processing this crustacean, involving its immediate freezing or cooking, after being pulled out of the frozen waters.

"Through special teams, we determined the existence of a large school of krill; upon our return, it was reduced to a little more than half after the Russian fishing boats had gone through," emphasized Oscar Guzman.

Positive Results

The scientist stressed the need for scientifically determining the krill reproduction capacity; he said that this expedition has been very positive and that specific data will be obtained over the next 3 months to permit the countries that signed the Antarctic Treaty to work out regulations concerning krill fishing.

Noting that the countries involved in research work have different ideologies, the scientist felt that one of the positive results of this effort was that Chile stands out by virtue of its contribution to this effort. He added that this study will

make it possible, in the not too distant future, to determine the life cycle of the krill, the specific places where it is found in larger quantities, and the future handling of exploitation of this product.

Guzman finally noted that this expedition was part of an investigation effort that will last at least 10 years and that, in longer-range terms, there will be a new combined mission to the Antarctic region in 1983.

The Chilean delegation traveled in the vessel "Itzumi," given to Chile by the government of Japan last year.

The press conference was also attended by the deputy director of the Antarctic Institute, Bruno Klaue, who emphasized the work done by the Chilean scientists.

5058
CSO: 3010

MINISTERS RECOMMEND SEASONAL SHRIMPING BAN

Kuwait KUWAIT TIMES in English 24 Feb 81 p 2

[Text]

ABU DHABI, Mon. — Banning the fishing and marketing of shrimps during their mating period from Feb. 1 to June 30 was one of the important recommendations issued at the end of their meeting on Sunday night, by the Arab Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Ministers of Agriculture.

The ban will be determined annually by the parties concerned in each country separately according to its circumstances.

The sixth conference recommended the meeting of the Undersecretaries in the first half of next June in Sanaa to study the goals and specialisations of the conference's General Secretariat. They will further determine its responsibilities and duties in the next stage.

The conferees recommended that every country would formulate a law or a system to exploit sea wealth taking into consideration the unification of the countries' laws within the system's general framework.

The conference agreed that the participant countries with fish surplus are to in-

form the General Secretariat about the kinds of these fish, quantities and prices in local markets so that exchange to mutual benefit between the member countries could be achieved.

EXPERTS

The conference assigned the General Secretariat to contact the International Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) to send two experts. They will be asked to evaluate the Gulf's stock of shrimps, lobsters and fish and to present a report on their findings to the General Secretariat.

The conference asked the members to take advantage of the Fisheries training centre in Kuwait and the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research particularly with regard to the results it achieved in raising shrimps and fish.

The conference recommended the establishment of a technical committee from Oman and the two Yemens in addition to resorting to the FAO's expertise to present a unified project to exploit the available kinds of fish in these countries. They will further study the project's economic feasibility and then present it to another committee formed by the conference. — Kuna.

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